

CLAIMS

1. Method of supplying power to a motor-vehicle electric-starter contactor (10) in which, on a circuit
5 (T1, B, 20, 25) for supplying power to the contactor (10), an effective-power-supply signal (R1, R2, R3) is provided having a chosen profile, characterised in that, on the power-supply circuit (T1, B, 20, 25), a supplementary signal (T, R4) is also provided having a
10 shape which is chosen in order to facilitate the identification of the profile of the effective-power-supply signal (R1, R2, R3).
2. Method according to Claim 1, characterised in that the supplementary signal (T, R4) is chosen so as
15 to have no mechanical effect on the contactor (10).
3. Method according to Claim 1, characterised in that the supplementary signal (T, R4) is a pulse train.
4. Method according to Claim 1, characterised in that the supplementary signal (T, R4) features a chosen
20 duration (T) specific to the profile of the effective-power-supply signal (R1, R2, R3).
5. Method according to Claim 3, characterised in that the supplementary signal (T, R4) exhibits a chosen number of pulses specific to the profile of the effective-power-supply signal (R1, R2, R3).
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6. Method according to Claim 3, characterised in that the pulse train (T, R4) exhibits a ratio of duration between a high state and a low state which is specific to the profile of effective current strength.
- 30 7. Method according to Claim 3, characterised in that the pulse train (T, R4) constitutes a coding the high states of which exhibit at least two different durations.
8. Method according to Claim 3, characterised in
35 that the pulse train (T, R4) exhibits a frequency (R4)

which is different from that used to introduce the variation in effective current strength (R1, R2).

9. Method according to Claim 3, characterised in that the pulse train (T, R4) exhibits a chosen frequency modulation.

10. Method according to Claim 1, characterised in that the supplementary signal (T, R4) is generated before generating the effective-power-supply signal (R1, R2, R3).

10 11. Device for supplying power to a motor-vehicle starter contactor (10), including a circuit (T1, B, 20, 25) for supplying power to the contactor (10) and means (25, T1) for providing, on this circuit (T1, B, 20, 25), an effective-power-supply signal (R1, R2, R3) having a chosen profile, characterised in that it also includes means (25, T1) for providing, on the power-supply circuit (T1, B, 20, 25), a supplementary signal (T, R4) having a shape which is chosen in order to facilitate the identification of the chosen profile of
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20 the effective-power-supply signal (R1, R2, R3).

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